

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A merge information providing apparatus ~~having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means~~ comprising:

a plurality of ~~plural user information providing means~~ for providing user information regarding a user; and ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~ [[,]]

means for ~~said merge information providing apparatus~~ acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means and ~~providing merging~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus [[of]] as claimed in claim 1, wherein said merge information providing apparatus comprises:

user information acquisition means for acquiring said information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means; and

user information merging means for merging said information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means by using first use permission information permitting the use of each of said plurality of user information providing means.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 3, further comprising use permission information acquisition means for acquiring said first use permission information from each of said plurality of user information providing means.

Claim 5 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising use permission information creation means for creating second use permission information that permits the use of said merge user information providing means.

Claim 6 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus of the claim 5, wherein said use permission information creation means creates said second use permission information including said first use permission information by using said first use permission information.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising ~~setting~~ means for setting up each of said plurality of ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and further providing an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means and providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 9 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 8, further comprising:

user information acquisition means for acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

user information merging means for merging said information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 10 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using first use permission information permitting the use of said user information providing means.

Claim 11 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 10, further comprising use permission information acquisition means for acquiring said first use permission information from said user information providing means.

Claim 12 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 8, further comprising use permission information creation means for creating second use permission information that permits the use of said merge user information providing means.

Claim 13 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said use permission information creation means creates said second use permission information including said first use permission information by using said first use permission information.

Claim 14 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 8, further comprising setting means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 8, further comprising authentication information acquisition means for acquiring first authentication information certifying authentication of said user in said user information providing means, from said user information providing means.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising second authentication information creation means for creating second authentication information containing therein said first authentication information and certifying authentication of said user in said merge user information providing means by using said first authentication information.

Claim 17 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 8, further comprising user distinction information acquisition means for acquiring user distinction information that distinguishes said user from said user information providing means.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said user distinction information acquisition means acquires said user distinction information from said user information providing means by using first authentication information included in said second authentication information.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): An information providing apparatus ~~having user information providing means for providing information regarding a user~~ [[,]] comprising:
~~said user information providing means~~ for providing information regarding a designated user in response to a request from a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus,

wherein said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus ~~comprising~~ includes said user information providing means and other user information providing means [[as]] that are subordinate ~~user information providing means~~ [[,]] to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein said user information providing means further comprises ~~user information saving~~ means for saving said information regarding said user.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein said information regarding said user is user information and/or group information of a group to which said user ~~belong~~ belongs, and wherein said group information includes user information and/or group information of other user information providing means.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The information providing apparatus having user information providing means providing information regarding a user and further an authentication service regarding said user,

said user information providing means providing information regarding a designated user in response to a request from a merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate user information providing means, to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 23 (Original): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said user information providing means further comprises user information saving means for saving said information regarding said user.

Claim 24 (Original): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said information regarding said user is user information and/or group information of a group to which said user belongs, and wherein said group information includes user information and/or group information of other user information providing means.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A managing apparatus, comprising:

a merge information providing apparatus ~~having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing~~ including a plurality of means for providing information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means, [[and]]~~

~~setup request transmission~~ means for transmitting a setup request regarding a set up of each of said ~~subordinate~~ plurality of user information providing means, and

~~means for said merge information providing apparatus~~ acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means and ~~providing merging~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 25, further comprising:

~~user information acquisition~~ means for acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means; and

~~user information merging~~ means for merging said user information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 26, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means by using first use permission information permitting the use of each of said plurality of user information providing means.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The ~~merge information providing~~ managing apparatus as claimed in claim 27, further comprising use permission information acquisition means for acquiring said first use permission information from each of said plurality of user information providing means.

Claim 29 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 25, further comprising use permission information creation means for creating second use permission information that permits the use of said merge user information providing means.

Claim 30 (Original): The managing apparatus of the claim 29, wherein said use permission information creation means creates said second use permission information including said first use permission information by using said first use permission information.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 25, further comprising ~~setting~~ means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): A managing apparatus, comprising:
a merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and further providing an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means;
and

setup request transmission means for transmitting a request regarding setting up of said subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means and providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 33 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 32, further comprising:

user information acquisition means for acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

user information merging means for merging said information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 34 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 33, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using first use permission information permitting the use of said user information providing means.

Claim 35 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising use permission information acquisition means for acquiring said first use permission information from said user information providing means.

Claim 36 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 32, further comprising use permission information creation means for creating second use permission information that permits the use of said merge user information providing means.

Claim 37 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 36, wherein said use permission information creation means creates said second use permission information including said first use permission information by using said first use permission information.

Claim 38 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 32, further comprising setting means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 32, further comprising authentication information acquisition means for acquiring first authentication information certifying authentication of said user in said user information providing means, from said user information providing means.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 39, further comprising second authentication information creation means for creating second authentication information containing therein said first authentication information and certifying authentication of said user in said merge user information providing means by using said first authentication information.

Claim 41 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 32, further comprising user distinction information acquisition means for acquiring user distinction information that distinguishes said user from said user information providing means.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 41, wherein said user distinction information acquisition means acquires said user distinction information from said user information providing means by using first authentication information included in said second authentication information.

Claim 43 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 42, further comprising setting screen display means for displaying a screen for setting said merge user information providing means and said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): A merge information providing method in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus including comprising plural user information providing a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means; and

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 45 (Original): A merge information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means and further an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

providing said information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 46 (Currently Amended): An information providing method in a user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus including means for providing user information regarding a user, said method comprising:

~~a user information offer providing step for~~ providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means apparatus comprising including said user information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing means apparatus.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): An information providing method in user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising:

a user information providing step for providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate user information providing means, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 48 (Currently Amended): A managing method in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information apparatus including providing means comprising plural user information providing a plurality of means for providing information regarding a user ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means;

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a set up request ~~requesting for a set up~~ of said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): A managing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and

transmitting a set up request regarding a set up of said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 50 (Currently Amended): A computer-implemented method for providing merge information in a merge user information providing ~~apparatus~~ means, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing apparatus~~ including a plurality of means for providing information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means; and

merging ~~providing~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 51 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented method of providing merge information in merge user information providing means, said merge user information

providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means and further an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

providing said information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 52 (Currently Amended): A computer-implemented method of providing information in a user information providing means apparatus, said user information providing apparatus including a means for providing information regarding a user, said method comprising:

~~a user information offer providing step for~~ providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means apparatus comprising including said user information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing means apparatus.

Claim 53 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented method of providing information in user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising:

a user information providing step for providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as

subordinate user information providing means, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended): A computer-implemented method of managing information in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing~~ apparatus including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means;

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a set up request ~~requesting~~ for a set up of said ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means.

Claim 55 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented method of managing in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and

transmitting a set up request regarding a set up of said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 56 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing merge information in a merge user information providing apparatus means, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing~~ apparatus including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means; and

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 57 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing merge information in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means and further an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

providing said information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 58 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing information in a user information providing apparatus means, said user information providing apparatus including means for providing user information regarding a user, said method comprising:

~~a user information offer providing step for providing~~, in response to a request from a merge user information providing ~~means comprising~~ apparatus including said user

information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus.

Claim 59 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing information in user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising:

a user information providing step for providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate user information providing means, information regarding a designated user to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 60 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium storing program code for managing information in a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing apparatus including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means~~, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said user information regarding said user from each of said plurality of user information providing means;

merging ~~providing~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a set up request ~~requesting~~ for a set up of each of said ~~subordinate plurality of~~ user information providing means.

Claim 61 (Previously Presented): A processor readable medium for storing program code for managing in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, said method comprising the steps of:

acquiring said information regarding said user from said user information providing means;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and

transmitting a set up request regarding a set up of said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 62 (Currently Amended): A merge information providing apparatus ~~having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising:~~

~~plural user information providing~~ a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user; ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~ [[,]]

~~said merge information providing apparatus~~ means for acquiring said user information regarding a user registered to [[the]] one of said user information providing means of which use is permitted; and

means for acquiring said user information regarding the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user ~~by the user~~ as to whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted, said merge information providing apparatus ~~providing~~ merging said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 63 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 62, further comprising:

~~distinction information managing~~ means for managing distinction information that distinguishes said user registered to said user information providing means;

~~user information acquisition~~ means for acquiring said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

~~user information merging~~ means for merging said user information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 64 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim [[62]] 63, wherein said distinction information managing means provides said distinction information of said same user to said user information acquisition means in response to a request from said user information acquisition means.

Claim 65 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 62, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using permission information that permits the use of said distinction information and said user information providing means.

Claim 66 (Currently Amended): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 62, further comprising ~~set-up~~ means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 67 (Previously Presented): A merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing user information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring user information regarding a user registered to the user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication is made therein and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user by whether or not the use of the user information providing means is permitted and/or the authentication is made, said merge information providing apparatus providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 68 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 67, comprising:

distinction information managing means for managing distinction information that distinguishes said user is registered to said user information providing means;

user information acquisition means for acquiring said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

user information merging means merging said user information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 69 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 68, wherein said distinction information managing means provides said distinction

information of said same user to said user information acquisition means according to a request from said user information acquisition means.

Claim 70 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 68, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using permission information that permits the use of said distinction information and said user information providing means.

Claim 71 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 67, further comprising set up means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 72 (Previously Presented): A merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing user information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring user information regarding a user registered to the user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication is made therein and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user by whether or not the use of the user information providing means is permitted and/or the authentication is made, said merge information providing apparatus providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 73 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 72, further comprises authentication information acquisition means for acquiring first authentication information that certifies said user in said main user information providing means from said main user information providing means.

Claim 74 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 73, further comprising second authentication information creation means for creating second authentication information that certifies said user in said merge user information providing means and including said first authentication information, by using said first authentication information acquired in said authentication information acquisition means.

Claim 75 (Previously Presented): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 74, further comprising second authentication information providing means for providing said second authentication information to a client requesting said authentication.

Claim 76 (Original): The merge information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 72, further comprising set up means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 77 (Currently Amended): An information providing apparatus ~~having user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user~~ [[,]] comprising:

~~said user information providing~~ means for providing user information regarding ~~said a~~ user, said user information providing means corresponding to ~~[[said]]~~ a distinction information that distinguishes said user registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means to a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus in response to a request from said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus including said user information providing means and other user information providing means as ~~subordinate user information providing means~~.

Claim 78 (Currently Amended): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 77, further comprising ~~user information providing~~ means for saving said information regarding the ~~said~~ user.

Claim 79 (Original): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 77, wherein said information regarding said user is user information and/or group information of a group to which said user belongs, said group information including user information and/or group information of other user information providing means.

Claim 80 (Previously Presented): An information providing apparatus having user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user,

said user information providing means comprising user information providing means for providing, in response to a request from merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate user information providing

means, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information that distinguishes said user registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means, to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 81 (Currently Amended): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 78, wherein said user information providing means further ~~comprising~~ comprises ~~user information saving~~ means for saving said user information regarding to said user.

Claim 82 (Original): The information providing apparatus as claimed in claim 80, wherein said information regarding said user comprises user information and/or group information about a group to which said user belongs, said group information including user information and/or group information of other user information providing means.

Claim 83 (Currently Amended): A managing apparatus, comprising:
~~a merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing~~ including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means; and~~
~~setup request transmission~~ means for transmitting information regarding set up of said ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means,
~~said merge information providing apparatus~~ means for acquiring said user information regarding a user registered to the user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user by the user information providing means of which use is permitted,

said merge information providing apparatus ~~providing~~ merging said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 84 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 83, comprising:

~~distinction information managing~~ means for managing distinction information that distinguishes whether said user is registered to said user information providing means;

~~user information acquisition~~ means for acquiring said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

~~user information merging~~ means for merging said user information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 85 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim ~~[[83]]~~ 84, wherein said distinction information managing means provides said distinction information of said same user to said user information acquisition means in response to a request from said user information acquisition means.

Claim 86 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim ~~[[83]]~~ 84, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using permission information that permits the use of said distinction information and said user information providing means.

Claim 87 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 83, further comprising ~~set-up~~ means for setting up said ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 88 (Currently Amended): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 83, further comprising ~~setup screen display~~ means for displaying a screen for setting up said merge user information providing means and said ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means.

Claim 89 (Previously Presented): A managing apparatus, comprising:
a merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing user information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means; and

setup request transmission means for transmitting information regarding to set up of subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring user information regarding a user registered to the user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication is made therein and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user by whether or not the use of the user information providing means is permitted and/or the authentication is made, said merge information providing apparatus providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 90 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 89, comprising:
distinction information managing means for managing distinction information that distinguishes said user is registered to said user information providing means;

user information acquisition means for acquiring said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means; and

user information merging means merging said user information regarding said user acquired in said user information acquisition means.

Claim 91 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 90, wherein said distinction information managing means provides said distinction information of said same user to said user information acquisition means according to a request from said user information acquisition means.

Claim 92 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 90, wherein said user information acquisition means acquires said user information regarding said user from said user information providing means by using permission information that permits the use of said distinction information and said user information providing means.

Claim 93 (Original): The managing apparatus providing apparatus as claimed in claim 89, further comprising set up means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 94 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 89, further comprising setup screen display means for displaying a screen for setting up said merge user information providing means and said subordinate user information providing means.

Claim 95 (Previously Presented): A managing apparatus, comprising:

a merge information providing apparatus having merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing user information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means; and

setup request transmission means for transmitting information regarding set up of said subordinate user information providing means,

said merge information providing apparatus acquiring user information regarding a user registered to the user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or the authentication is made therein and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing the user by whether or not the use of the user information providing means is permitted and/or the authentication is made, said merge information providing apparatus providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 96 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 95, further comprises authentication information acquisition means for acquiring first authentication information that certifies said user in said main user information providing means from said main user information providing means.

Claim 97 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 96, further comprising second authentication information creation means for creating second authentication information that certifies said user in said merge user information providing means and including said first authentication information, by using said first authentication information acquired in said authentication information acquisition means.

Claim 98 (Previously Presented): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 96, further comprising second authentication information providing means for providing said second authentication information to a client requesting said authentication.

Claim 99 (Original): The managing apparatus as claimed in claim 95, further comprising set up means for setting up said subordinate user information providing means according to a request.

Claim 100 (Currently Amended): A merge user information providing method in a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing~~ including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as ~~subordinate user information providing means~~, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and

merging ~~providing~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 101 (Previously Presented): A merge user information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and
providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 102 (Previously Presented): A merge user information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and
providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 103 (Currently Amended): An information providing method in a user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said user information providing apparatus including means for providing information regarding a user, comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising~~ apparatus including said user information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate information providing means~~, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user

information providing means for distinguishing said user to said merge user information providing means apparatus.

Claim 104 (Previously Presented): An information providing method in user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate information providing means, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means for distinguishing said user, to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 105 (Currently Amended): A managing method in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing means ~~comprising plural user information providing~~ including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

merging ~~providing~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a request regarding setup of said ~~subordinate~~ user information providing means.

Claim 106 (Previously Presented): A managing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 107 (Previously Presented): A managing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 108 (Original): A computer-implemented merge user information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 109 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented merge user information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 110 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented merge user information providing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and
providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 111 (Currently Amended): A computer-implemented information providing method in a user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said user information providing apparatus including means for providing user information regarding a user, comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising~~ apparatus including said user information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate information providing means~~, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means for distinguishing said user to said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus.

Claim 112 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented information providing method in user information providing means, said user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate information providing means, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means for distinguishing said user, to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 113 (Currently Amended): A computer-implemented managing method in a merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing~~ apparatus including means for providing user information regarding a user ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

merging ~~providing~~ said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a request regarding setup of said ~~subordinate~~ information providing means.

Claim 114 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented managing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 115 (Previously Presented): A computer-implemented managing method in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 116 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium storing a program code for providing merge user information in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing~~ apparatus including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user ~~as subordinate user information providing means~~, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~.

Claim 117 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing merge user information in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 118 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium for providing merge user information in merge user information providing means, said merge user

information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted; and providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging.

Claim 119 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium for providing information in a user information providing means apparatus, said user information providing apparatus including means for providing user information regarding a user, comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising~~ apparatus including said user information providing means and other user information providing means ~~as subordinate information providing means~~, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means for distinguishing said user to said merge user information providing ~~means~~ apparatus.

Claim 120 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium storing program code for providing information in user information providing means, said user information

providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user, said method comprising the step of:

providing, in response to a request from merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising said user information providing means and other user information providing means as subordinate information providing means, information regarding a user corresponding to distinction information registered to said user information providing means and/or other user information providing means for distinguishing said user, to said merge user information providing means.

Claim 121 (Currently Amended): A processor-readable medium for managing information in a merge user information providing means apparatus, said merge user information providing ~~means comprising plural user information providing apparatus~~ including a plurality of means for providing user information regarding a user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

merging providing said acquired user information regarding said user ~~with merging~~;
and

transmitting a request regarding setup of said ~~subordinate~~ information providing means.

Claim 122 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium for managing in merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means

comprising plural user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 123 (Previously Presented): A processor-readable medium for managing method merge user information providing means, said merge user information providing means comprising main user information providing means and sub user information providing means providing information regarding a user and an authentication service regarding said user as subordinate user information providing means, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information regarding a user registered to said user information providing means of which use is permitted and/or authentication has been made and the same user registered to other user information providing means, without distinguishing said user by whether or not the use of said user information providing means is permitted;

providing said acquired information regarding said user with merging; and
transmitting a request regarding setup of said subordinate information providing means.

Claim 124 (New): A merge information providing apparatus, comprising:

means for receiving an acquisition request for access for a user to an information provider of a plurality of information providers;

means for acquiring user information regarding the user from the plurality of information providers based on the acquisition request; and

means for merging the acquired user information into merged user information.